



Council of Europe Campaign for
the **Safety of Journalists**

Campagne du Conseil de l'Europe pour
la **sécurité des journalistes**

JOURNALISTS MATTER

Strasbourg, 6 February 2023

NATIONAL COMMITTEES

Information document prepared by the Secretariat

National committees

The Council of Europe encourages member states to transpose the Campaign to the national context. Without each member's committed and effective effort at national level, through the development of the so-called 'national chapter', the Campaign cannot reach its goals. This will involve the elaboration and implementation of a comprehensive, multidimensional ***national action plan*** for the protection of journalists' safety.

The Council of Europe will accompany and facilitate the organisation and implementation of 'national chapters' by the member States according to the national needs.

To identify needs and design comprehensive strategies and measures, as a pre-requirement for the elaboration and implementation of the *national action plan*, **national committees (NC) for the protection of journalists' safety** will need to be established.

Role

Each National Committee will operate as an interagency, multi-stakeholder structure, bringing together representatives of agencies and organizations involved in the transposition of the Campaign at the national level. It shall be entrusted the key task of designing a *national action plan for the protection of Journalists' safety*, as well that of setting related protection mechanisms, and of coordinating and reviewing its implementation.

National Committees will have a key role in the **identification of domestic needs and challenges** as a pre-requirement for the determination of national priorities under the Campaign. The information provided by the alerts and annual reports published within the framework of the Platform for the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists, along with that from other sources, should be given particular attention.

National committees are expected to **co-ordinate national activities** (including at local and regional level) that are relevant to the Campaign and its progress and to **inform the Secretariat of the Campaign** on issues (new developments and/or trends, good or less promising practices).

National Committees shall organise, in cooperation with the Campaign Secretariat, awareness raising actions, particularly on the international days dedicated to the Press Freedom (3 May - World Press freedom day) or to the Safety of Journalists (2 November- International day to end impunity for crimes against journalists), or any other day/Week as decided in the scope of the Campaign.

National Committees will interact and coordinate their activities with the Council of Europe Campaign Secretariat through a designated **focal point**. Further interaction and activities will be carried on with other partners/stakeholders at domestic and international levels.

Composition

National Committees should bring together **the main stakeholders expected, according to the national context, to be active in the various dimensions of the Campaign at domestic level**. This is likely to secure

- a proper assessment of existing challenges and needs (in the light of the domestic environment in which journalists and other media actors are working),
- coordinated and timely action,
- increased capacity to advocate at the political level and raise awareness in society for the issues of the Campaign, and
- deeper and wider impact.

The following types of stakeholders may be represented in the National Committees:

- governmental agencies/bodies/authorities involved with freedom of expression, media and information, internet governance issues, including;
 - relevant ministries
 - law enforcement agencies;
 - the judiciary;
 - parliamentary committees dealing with freedom of expression/ media;
- Ombudsman and other independent national HR institutions; anti-discrimination/hate speech agencies;
- journalists associations and unions;
- national press councils ;

- public service media;
- civil society organizations active in the fields of media freedom, human rights, including gender equality oriented ones;
- Internet and media related businesses and organisations;
- intergovernmental organisations (Council of Europe, UNESCO, OSCE RFoM, OHCHR, EU), including locally based offices/ programmes coordinators.

Member states will be invited to appoint a **focal point** (contact person) for communication with the Council of Europe Campaign Secretariat. The focal point may be, or not a member of the National Committee (in the latter case close coordination between the focal point and the national committee will be necessary throughout the campaign).

National action plans and protection mechanisms

National action plans and **protection mechanisms** are expected to be developed under the Campaign building on the guidelines provided by [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2016\)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors](#) and its Implementation Guide Implementation guide [“How to protect journalists and other media actors?”](#).

More specific guidance will be provided throughout the activities dedicated to the campaign. *General outlines for national action plans* as well as *existing best practices* will be shared to inspire the setting up of such structures. *Specific checklists* for practical steps will be developed around each of the four pillars of Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4. These should operate as dynamic work-plans for member states, to be adjusted and adapted according to the national context, the most recent developments in the field and drawing on the conclusions of the *annual thematic sessions* organised by the Council of Europe around the four pillars of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4.

